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DEPT. FOR PM/DTTC - BLUE LANTERN COORDINATOR AND EUR/AGS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: ETTC KOMC GM

SUBJECT: BLUE LANTERN PRE-CHECK ON DTTC LICENSE 05-973079:
CONFIRMATION OF GERMAN FIRM IBR AERONAUTICAL CONSULTING'S
PARTICIPATION IN THE SOLAR IMPULSE PROGRAM

REF: STATE 80805

¶1. (SBU) POL/ECON Officer and an LES researched bona fides of ref German firm IBR Aeronautical Consulting, and visited Hannes Ross, IBR's owner and sole employee, at his home office on June 29. When asked, Ross explained that the confusion over a firm by the name of EEL (reftel) being listed at the same address as IBR was due to his allowing the owner of EEL, a longtime friend and former colleague who now resides and works in the Canary Islands, to use his home as a German mailing address. Ross further explained that tracking down IBR was difficult, as he is retired and only does part-time consulting work from his home. Ross said IBR stands for "Ingenieur Buero Ross."

¶2. (SBU) Ross was very cooperative, spoke fluent English, and expressed familiarity with U.S. export controls, saying he had even asked Athena representatives if this would be a problem. In conversation, Ross demonstrated a strong knowledge of the aviation industry in general, and of the Solar Impulse program in particular. Ross stated he had previously done work for McDonnell Douglass, Boeing and EADS. Ross also said he had worked on the joint U.S.-German X-31 program. He was able to produce a large collection of business cards he had acquired from years in the aviation business and air shows, including one for the U.S. Defense Attach in Berlin.

¶3. (SBU) Regarding the questions in para 3 of reftel:
a) Ross said his initial contact with Athena Technologies was at the 2005 Paris Air Show, where Athena had a display;
b) Ross initiated the contact with Athena; c) There is no set timeline for deliverables with Athena, as there is no contract in place yet between IBR and Athena. Ross did state that the first demo flight of the Solar Impulse was expected to be in 2008, so any deliverables would presumably have to be completed by then; d) Ross was not able to produce any documentation of IBR's relationship with Athena or the European Space Agency (ESA). He explained this by saying he had had only personal and e-mail contact with Athena, and previous e-mails had been deleted. Ross was able to produce business cards for Athena from the 2005 Paris Air Show -- one for James Dotan, VP of Business Development, and another for Ben Motazed, Senior VP for Strategy and Business. As there was no contract between the two firms yet, there was no other documentation he could share. Ross said he has had no direct contact with ESA up till now.

¶4. (U) Post found no indication that Ross was misrepresenting himself, or his business. He provided a business card with the following information:

IBR Aeronautical Consulting

Hannes Ross
Dipl.-Ing
Andreas-Wagner-Str. 3
D-85640 Putzbrunn
Tel/Fax:0049-89-460-4026
Mobil:0049-173-983-6036
E-mail:hannes.ross@t-online.de

¶5. (U) This report has been coordinated with Embassy Berlin.

¶6. (U) Previous reporting from Munich is available on our SIPRNET website at www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/munich/ .

ROONEY